

tions with advantage to the public service. The Parliamentary Counsel to the Treasury said : " I have always found the oldest hands the most legible ; the court hand, which was the original hand for records, was, perhaps, the handsomest hand that ever was written ; the present engrossing hand results from the court hand ; I find it more easy to read the engrossing or the Court hand than any other hand whatever." An officer of the Court of the Court of Common Pleas gave evidence to show that modern writing would not remain legible any length of time as compared with the " court hand." There is no doubt that the writing and the ink in England four centuries ago were admirable.

—Mr. James W. Gerard, of the New York bar, was in a case where his client, plaintiff, sat beside him, holding a gold-headed cane. The merits were with the plaintiff, but the jury went out and remained out. Eleven of them were in favor of the plaintiff, but the remaining man would not listen to reason, nor did he seem at all inclined to give any ground for holding out. They so remained for a great length of time. At last this one was induced to say why he would not agree with the others. ' I never will find a verdict in favor of a man who carries a gold-headed cane.' This still checked the others ; and one of the eleven seemed to begin to waver ; and appeared to give in to the propriety of the principle which was involved in this ostentatious exhibition of a gold-headed cane ; but he, significantly, called the obstinate one aside, and told him how he himself, while they were all in court, had particularly observed and been offended at this gold-headed cane, and experienced a similar feeling of repugnance against the plaintiff ; and that this had caused him to pay particular attention to the cane, and he had ascertained, as a fact, that it was not gold—only pinchbeck—mere brass metal. The obstinate jurymen accepted this assurance, and agreed, with his fellows, in finding a verdict for the plaintiff.

A CURIOUS WILL.—We take from the Boston *Advertiser* the following account of the mode in which a testator punished his avaricious relatives by a clause in his will which was made to depend upon their conduct. The *Advertiser* says :—" A curious will has just been settled in Berlin, containing a moral worth a wider circulation than a miser's last statement often

obtains. The poor man died, when, to general surprise, it was found he had left 34,000 marks. The 30,000 in a package, signed and sealed, was to be given to his native town in Bavaria ; 1,000 each to three brothers, and 1,000 to a friend with whom he had quarreled. It was stipulated that none of the four should follow the body to the grave, which suggestion the three brothers gladly accepted, but the quarrel walked alone and forfeited his 1,000 marks, for the sake of paying a last mitigating honor. When the package was opened for the town, it disclosed another will, giving the 30,000 to any of the four who should disregard the stipulation."

ENGLISH LAW.—The *Solicitors' Journal* thus speaks of the growth of English law during the past year : " As to the growth of English law during the year, there is little to be said. The last session produced several administrative acts, such as the Prison Act and the Solicitors' Examination Act ; but, as regards alterations in the substance of the law, it was almost a blank. There were two or three comparatively small changes in real property law, an amendment of the Factors' Acts, and a useful consolidation of the Settled Estates Acts, but little more. Nor can we point to many judicial decisions of wide-reaching scope or great importance. The recently devised doctrine of the fiduciary relationship of the promoter has been again laid down ; and the doctrine of contempt of court, which at one time threatened to assume alarming proportions, has been opportunely checked by the Court of Appeal, which, in reversing a singular decision of Vice-Chancellor Malins, stated that ' the exercise of this arbitrary jurisdiction ought to be most jealously and carefully guarded ; that a court ought not to resort to it except in cases where no other remedy is to be found ; and that it was ' a power which ought only to be used in extreme cases.' It is in lengthy criminal inquiries and in ecclesiastical law cases that the year has been mainly memorable. The case of *Clifton v. Ridsdale* has probably settled for some time the questions as to external observances ; and the case of the Rev. Arthur Tooth, who after being ' attached by his body until he should have made satisfaction for his contempt,' succeeded in placing his heel on the neck of Lord Penzance, has brought home to the public at large a profound conviction of the mysterious uncertainty of ecclesiastical law."